# Sociology of Consumption and Psychology of Organisation

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course has a double objective. First of all, it aims to introduce the key concepts to analyse and interpret, from a sociological perspective, consumer behaviours in contemporary societies. This will help students understand, from a critical point of view, the social phenomena related to consumer orientations, and develop their knowledge of the analytical tools and the most relevant theories of this subject.

Secondly, it aims to explore the different organisational processes at the basis of the response to social phenomena and orientations. In particular, it will focus on the different management strategies adopted by the companies that produce goods and services, and the relational and cultural processes involved.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. know the key concepts at the basis of the analysis of the sociology of consumption, and understand the most relevant theoretical approaches and empirical research tools offered by this subject; use their newly acquired knowledge to understand the organisational and relational processes that have been created in response to the contemporary society;
2. apply their newly acquired skills in terms of relational dynamics and organisational processes to build their own career path in a company (also thanks to the inputs provided by the lecturer);
3. develop a greater awareness of organisational culture and communication within service management companies
4. acquire self and hetero-observation skills, and carry out a critical analysis of specific topics and of related disciplinary and research issues;
5. develop and use their communication skills to make an oral presentation of the results obtained during the practical activities.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will be divided in two complementary modules: the first one will be based on the sociology of consumption, while the second will be focused on organisational psychology. This will allow students to analyse, from a double perspective, the social and organisational phenomena related to consumer orientations.

The first module will explore consumption and, in particular, the concept of consumer behaviour, from an interdisciplinary perspective, combining sociology with other subjects, such as economics, psychology, anthropology, and communication.

It will cover the following topics:

– The consumption: society, culture and practice.

* The sociological theories about consumption
* The socio-economic and psychological variables involved in consumer behaviour
* The consumer behaviour trends of contemporary societies: the concept of mass-customization, ethics as a dimension of quality, the practices of a critical and aware consumption, the sharing economy, the influence of social networks on consumer behaviours.
* The challenges of the present times: consumptions during Covid-19; sustainability.

The second module will be focused on the field of organisational studies and social science, and it will offer an analysis of the topics related to organisational management from a psychological and relational perspective.

In particular, it will cover the following topics:

– Organisational psychology, conceived as a way to observe and study people’s behaviour in a working environment, including the nature and the quality of their interpersonal relationships in the organisational context

– Human capital, intended as a key strategic element in service management companies. HR management as a strategic leverage

– Communication within organisations: structures, elements, forms and orientation. The organisational climate.

***READING LIST***

P. Degli Esposti - C. Riva - F. Setiffi, *Sociologia dei consumi*, Utet, Novara, 2020 (chapters 3, 4 and 7)

R. Bartoletti, R. Paltrinieri, P. Parmiggiani (edited by),*Pratiche di consumo alla prova del Covid-19*, Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2022 Isbn: 9788835144694 (eBook) – scaricabile al link: https://series.francoangeli.it/index.php/oa/catalog/book/885

P.Argentero - C.G. Cortese, *Psicologia delle organizzazioni*, Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2018 (chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15)

Further information (e.g. suggested readings, additional teaching material, and case studies) will be made available on Blackboard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures and group activities.

The most theoretical aspects of the course will be supported by a more interactive teaching method, based on:

* lectures (to introduce the key concepts and theories of the subject);
* case studies;
* meetings with subject matter experts;
* practical activities;
* the discussion with students (based on their personal experiences).

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final assessment will be structured as follows: a first written exam (50% of the final mark), consisting in open~~-~~ended questions on module 1, followed by an oral exam (50% of the final mark) on module 2.

In addition, at the end of module 1, students will have the possibility to take an interim test on the first part of the course.

Assessment criteria: the use of an appropriate terminology; the understanding of the peculiarities of the sociological approach applied to consumption analysis, and of the psychological approach applied to the study of organisations and management; the knowledge of the key concepts of the subject; the ability to carry out a critical analysis of the course content; the ability to use theoretical concepts on emplirical cases.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.